

THE RADICAL.

OCTOBER, 1865.

SAVING FAITH.

BY J. C. L.

GREAT Spirit of renewing Truth!
Come shining through our darkened eyes,
And make the tides of light roll in,
To cleanse from error and from sin:
Destroy the Refuges of Lies.

If any falsehood of the Past
Round us has thrown its iron chain,
Burn through and melt each fettering link,
Ere slaves of Prejudice we sink:
Give us to Freedom once again.

Faith in the Present may we have!
Faith that God lives and works to-day!
Faith that all righteousness prevails,
That Revelation never fails
In souls that work and pray.

O Future, thou art held in trust!
To build for thee a glowing way
Our hearts are pledged: no Past can bind,
No Age's Promise is behind,—
Set forth! pursue the mighty day.

ADDRESS.*

BY R. W. EMERSON.

IN this refulgent summer, it has been a luxury to draw the breath of life. The grass grows, the buds burst, the meadow is spotted with fire and gold in the tint of flowers. The air is full of birds, and sweet with the breath of the pine, the balm-of-Gilead, and the new hay. Night brings no gloom to the heart with its welcome shade. Through the transparent darkness the stars pour their almost spiritual rays. Man under them seems a young child, and his huge globe a toy. The cool night bathes the world as with a river, and prepares his eyes again for the crimson dawn. The mystery of nature was never displayed more happily. The corn and the wine have been freely dealt to all creatures, and the never-broken silence with which the old bounty goes forward, has not yielded yet one word of explanation. One is constrained to respect the perfection of this world, in which our senses converse. How wide ; how rich ; what invitation from every property it gives to every faculty of man ! In its fruitful soils ; in its navigable sea ; in its mountains of metal and stone ; in its forests of all woods ; in its animals ; in its chemical ingredients ; in the powers and path of light, heat, attraction, and life, it is well worth the pith and heart of great men to subdue and enjoy it. The planters, the mechanics, the inventors, the astronomers, the builders of cities, and the captains, history delights to honor.

But when the mind opens, and reveals the laws which traverse the universe, and make things what they are, then shrinks the great world at once into a mere illustration and fable of this mind. What am I ? and What is ? asks the human spirit with a curiosity new-kindled, but never to be quenched. Behold these out-running laws, which our imperfect apprehension can see tend this way and that, but not come full circle. Behold these infinite relations, so like, so unlike ; many, yet one. I would study, I would know, I would admire forever. These works of thought have been the entertainments of the human spirit in all ages.

A more secret, sweet, and overpowering beauty appears to man when his heart and mind open to the sentiment of virtue. Then he is instructed in what is above him. He learns that his being is without bound ; that, to the good, to the perfect, he is born, low as he now

* Delivered before the Senior Class in Divinity College, Cambridge, Sunday Evening, July 15th, 1838. [Printed in *THE RADICAL*, by permission from the Author.]

lies in evil and weakness. That which he venerates is still his own, though he has not realized it yet. *He ought.* He knows the sense of that grand word, though his analysis fails to render account of it. When in innocency, or when by intellectual perception, he attains to say, — 'I love the Right ; Truth is beautiful within and without forevermore. Virtue, I am thine : save me : use me : thee will I serve, day and night, in great, in small, that I may be not virtuous, but virtue ;' — then is the end of the creation answered, and God is well pleased.

The sentiment of virtue is a reverence and delight in the presence of certain divine laws. It perceives that this homely game of life we play, covers, under what seem foolish details, principles that astonish. The child amidst its baubles, is learning the action of light, motion, gravity, muscular force ; and in the game of human life, love, fear, justice, appetite, man, and God, interact. These laws refuse to be adequately stated. They will not be written out on paper, or spoken by the tongue. They elude our persevering thought ; yet we read them hourly in each other's faces, in each other's actions, in our own remorse. The moral traits which are all globed into every virtuous act and thought, — in speech, we must sever, and describe or suggest by painful enumeration of many particulars. Yet, as this sentiment is the essence of all religion, let me guide your eye to the precise objects of the sentiment, by an enumeration of some of those classes of facts in which this element is conspicuous.

The intuition of the moral sentiment is an insight of the perfection of the laws of the soul. These laws execute themselves. They are out of time, out of space, and not subject to circumstance. Thus ; in the soul of man there is a justice whose retributions are instant and entire. He who does a good deed, is instantly ennobled. He who does a mean deed, is by the action itself contracted. He who puts off impurity, thereby puts on purity. If a man is at heart just, then in so far is he God ; the safety of God, the immortality of God, the majesty of God do enter into that man with justice. If a man dissemble, deceive, he deceives himself, and goes out of acquaintance with his own being. A man in the view of absolute goodness, adores, with total humanity. Every step so downward, is a step upward. The man who renounces himself, comes to himself.

See how this rapid intrinsic energy worketh everywhere, righting wrongs, correcting appearances, and bringing up facts to a harmony with thoughts. Its operation in life, though slow to the senses, is at last, as sure as in the soul. By it, a man is made the providence to himself, dispensing good to his goodness, and evil to his sin. Character is always known. Thefts never enrich ; alms never impoverish

murder will speak out of stone walls. (The least admixture of a lie, — for example, the taint of vanity, any attempt to make a good impression, a favorable appearance, — will instantly vitiate, the effect. But speak the truth, and all nature and all spirits help you with unexpected furtherance.) Speak the truth, and all things alive or brute are vouchers, and the very roots of the grass underground there, do seem to stir and move to bear you witness. / See again the perfection of the Law as it applies itself to the affections, and becomes the law of society. As we are, so we associate. The good, by affinity, seek the good ; the vile, by affinity, the vile. Thus of their own volition, souls proceed into heaven, into hell. (

These facts have always suggested to man the sublime creed, that the world is not the product of manifold power, but of one will, of one mind ; and that one mind is everywhere active, in each ray of the star, in each wavelet of the pool ; and whatever opposes that will, is everywhere balked and baffled, because things are made so, and not otherwise. Good is positive. Evil is merely privative, not absolute ; it is like cold, which is the privation of heat. All evil is so much death or nonentity. Benevolence is absolute and real. So much benevolence as a man hath, so much life hath he. For all things proceed out of this same spirit, which is differently named love, justice, temperance, in its different applications, just as the ocean receives different names on the several shores which it washes. All things proceed out of the same spirit, and all things conspire with it. Whilst a man seeks good ends, he is strong by the whole strength of nature. In so far as he roves from these ends, he bereaves himself of power, or auxiliaries ; his being shrinks out of all remote channels, he becomes less and less, a mote, a point, until absolute badness is absolute death.

The perception of this law of laws awakens in the mind a sentiment which we call the religious sentiment, and which makes our highest happiness. Wonderful is its power to charm and to command. It is a mountain air. It is the embalmer of the world. It is myrrh and storax, and chlorine and rosemary. It makes the sky and the hills sublime, and the silent song of the stars is it. By it, is the universe made safe and habitable, not by science or power. Thought may work cold and intransitive in things, and find no end or unity ; but the dawn of the sentiment of virtue on the heart, gives and is the assurance that Law is sovereign over all natures ; and the worlds, time, space, eternity, do seem to break out into joy.

This sentiment is divine and deifying. It is the beatitude of man. It makes him illimitable. Through it, the soul first knows itself. It corrects the capital mistake of the infant man, who seeks to be great

by following the great, and hopes to derive advantages *from another*, — by showing the fountain of all good to be in himself, and that he, equally with every man, is an inlet into the deeps of Reason. When he says, "I ought;" when love warms him; when he chooses, warned from on high, the good and great deed; then, deep melodies wander through his soul from Supreme Widsom. — Then he can worship, and be enlarged by his worship; for he can never go behind this sentiment. In the sublimest flights of the soul, rectitude is never surmounted, love is never outgrown.

This sentiment lies at the foundation of society, and successively creates all forms of worship. The principle of veneration never dies out. Man fallen into superstition, into sensuality, is never quite without the visions of the moral sentiment. In like manner, all the expressions of this sentiment are sacred and permanent in proportion to their purity. The expressions of this sentiment affect us more than all other compositions. The sentences of the oldest time, which ejaculate this piety, are still fresh and fragrant. This thought dwelled always deepest in the minds of men in the devout and contemplative East; not alone in Palestine, where it reached its purest expression, but in Egypt, in Persia, in India, in China. Europe has always owed to oriental genius its divine impulses. What these holy bards said, all sane men found agreeable and true. And the unique impression of Jesus upon mankind, whose name is not so much written as ploughed into the history of this world, is proof of the subtle virtue of this infusion.

Meantime, whilst the doors of the temple stand open, night and day, before every man, and the oracles of this truth cease never, it is guarded by one stern condition; this, namely; it is an intuition. It cannot be received at second hand. Truly speaking, it is not instruction, but provocation, that I can receive from another soul. What he announces, I must find true in me, or reject; and on his word, or as his second, be he who he may, I can accept nothing. On the contrary, the absence of this primary faith is the presence of degradation. As is the flood so is the ebb. Let this faith depart, and the very words it spake, and the things it made, become false and hurtful. Then falls the Church, the state, art, letters, life. The doctrine of the divine nature being forgotten, a sickness infects and dwarfs the constitution. Once man was all; now he is an appendage, a nuisance. And because the indwelling Supreme Spirit cannot wholly be got rid of, the doctrine of it suffers this perversion, that the divine nature is attributed to one or two persons, and denied to all the rest, and denied with fury. The doctrine of inspiration is lost; the base doctrine of the

majority of voices, usurps the place of the doctrine of the soul. Miracles, prophecy, poetry; the ideal life, the holy life, exist as ancient history merely; they are not in the belief, nor in the aspiration of society; but, when suggested, seem ridiculous. Life is comic or pitiful, as soon as the high ends of being fade out of sight, and man becomes near-sighted, and can only attend to what addresses the senses.

These general views, which, whilst they are general, none will contest, find abundant illustration in the history of religion, and especially in the history of the Christian church. In that, all of us have had our birth and nurture. The truth contained in that, you, my young friends, are now setting forth to teach. As the Cultus, or established worship of the civilized world, it has great historical interest for us. Of its blessed words, which have been the consolation of humanity, you need not that I should speak. I shall endeavor to discharge my duty to you, on this occasion, by pointing out two errors in its administration, which daily appear more gross from the point of view we have just now taken.

Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. He saw with open eye the mystery of the soul. Drawn by its severe harmony, ravished with its beauty, he lived in it, and had his being there. Alone in all history, he estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his world. He said, in this jubilee of sublime emotion, 'I am divine. Through me, God acts; through me, speaks. Would you see God, see me; or, see thee, when thou also thinkest as I now think.' But what a distortion did his doctrine and memory suffer in the same, in the next, and the following ages! There is no doctrine of the Reason which will bear to be taught by the Understanding. The understanding caught this high chant from the poet's lips, and said, in the next age, 'This was Jehovah come down out of heaven. I will kill you, if you say he was a man.' The idioms of his language, and the figures of his rhetoric, have usurped the place of his truth; and churches are not built on his principles, but on his tropes. Christianity became a Mythos, as the poetic teaching of Greece and of Egypt, before. He spoke of miracles; for he felt that man's life was a miracle, and all that man doth, and he knew that this daily miracle shines, as the character ascends. But the word Miracle, as pronounced by Christian churches, gives a false impression; it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain.

He felt respect for Moses and the prophets; but no unfit tenderness at postponing their initial revelations, to the hour and the man that

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now is ; to the eternal revelation in the heart. Thus was he a true man. Having seen that the law in us is commanding, he would not suffer it to be commanded. Boldly, with hand, and heart, and life, he declared it was God. (Thus is he, as I think, the only soul in history who has appreciated the worth of man.)

1. In this point of view we become sensible of the first defect of historical Christianity. Historical Christianity has fallen into the error that corrupts all attempts to communicate religion. As it appears to us, and as it has appeared for ages, it is not the doctrine of the soul, but an exaggeration of the personal, the positive, the ritual. It has dwelt, it dwells, with noxious exaggeration about the *person* of Jesus. The soul knows no persons. It invites every man to expand to the full circle of the universe, and will have no preferences but those of spontaneous love. But by this eastern monarchy of a Christianity, which indolence and fear have built, the friend of man is made the injurer of man. The manner in which his name is surrounded with expressions, which were once sallies of admiration and love, but are now petrified into official titles, kills all generous sympathy and liking. All who hear me, feel, that the language that describes Christ to Europe and America, is not the style of friendship and enthusiasm to a good and noble heart, but is appropriated and formal, — paints a demigod as the Orientals or the Greeks would describe Osiris or Apollo. Accept the injurious impositions of our early catachetical instruction, and even honesty and self-denial were but splendid sins, if they did not wear the Christian name. One would rather be

‘A pagan, suckled in a creed outworn,’

than to be defrauded of his manly right in coming into nature, and finding not names and places, not land and professions, but even virtue and truth foreclosed and monopolized. You shall not be a man even. You shall not own the world ; you shall not dare, and live after the infinite Law that is in you, and in company with the infinite Beauty which heaven and earth reflect to you in all lovely forms ; but you must subordinate your nature to Christ's nature ; you must accept our interpretations ; and take his portrait as the vulgar draw it.

That is always best which gives me to myself. The sublime is excited in me by the great stoical doctrine, Obey thyself. That which shows God in me, fortifies me. That which shows God out of me, makes me a wart and a wen. There is no longer a necessary reason for my being. Already the long shadows of untimely oblivion creep over me, and I shall de cease forever.

The divine bards are the friends of my virtue, of my intellect, of my strength. They admonish me, that the gleams which flash across my mind, are not mine, but God's ; that they had the like, and were not disobedient to the heavenly vision. So I love them. Noble provocations go out from them, inviting me to resist evil ; to subdue the world ; and to Be. (And thus by his holy thoughts, Jesus serves us, and thus only.) To aim to convert a man by miracles, is a profanation of the soul. A true conversion, a true Christ, is now, as always, to be made, by the reception of beautiful sentiments. It is true that a great and rich soul like his, falling among the simple, does so preponderate, that, as his did, it names the world. The world seems to them to exist for him, and they have not yet drunk so deeply of his sense, as to see that only by coming again to themselves, or to God in themselves, can they grow forevermore. It is a low benefit to give me something ; it is a high benefit to enable me to do somewhat of myself. / The time is coming when all men will see, that the gift of God to the soul is not a vaunting, overpowering, excluding sanctity, but a sweet, natural goodness, a goodness like thine and mine, and that so invites thine and mine to be and to grow.

The injustice of the vulgar tone of preaching is not less flagrant to Jesus, than to the souls which it profanes. The preachers do not see that they make his gospel not glad, and shear him of the locks of beauty and the attributes of heaven. When I see a majestic Epaminondas, or Washington ; when I see among my contemporaries, a true orator, an upright judge, a dear friend ; when I vibrate to the melody and fancy of a poem ; I see beauty that is to be desired. And so lovely, and with yet more entire consent of my human being, sounds in my ear the severe music of the bards that have sung of the true God in all ages. Now do not degrade the life and dialogues of Christ out of the circle of this charm, by insulation and peculiarity. Let them lie as they befel, alive and warm, part of human life, and of the landscape, and of the cheerful day.

2. The second defect of the traditionary and limited way of using the mind of Christ is a consequence of the first ; this, namely ; that the Moral Nature, that Law of laws, whose revelations introduce greatness, — yea, God himself, into the open soul, is not explored as the fountain of the established teaching in society. / Men have come to speak of the revelation as somewhat long ago given and done, as if God were dead. / The injury to faith throttles the preacher ; and the goodliest of institutions becomes an uncertain and inarticulate voice.

It is very certain that it is the effect of conversation with the beauty of the soul, to beget a desire and need to impart to others the same

knowledge and love. If utterance is denied, the thought lies like a burden on the man. Always the seer is a sayer. Somehow his dream is told : somehow he publishes it with solemn joy : sometimes with pencil on canvas ; sometimes with chisel on stone ; sometimes in towers and aisles of granite, his soul's worship is builded ; sometimes in anthems of indefinite music ; but clearest and most permanent, in words.

The man enamored of this excellency, becomes its priest or poet. The office is coeval with the world. But observe the condition, the spiritual limitation of the office. The spirit only can teach. Not any profane man, not any sensual, not any liar, not any slave can teach, but only he can give, who has ; he only can create, who is. The man on whom the soul descends, through whom the soul speaks, alone can teach. Courage, piety, love, wisdom, can teach ; and every man can open his door to these angels, and they shall bring him the gift of tongues. But the man who aims to speak as books enable, as synods use, as the fashion guides, and as interest commands, babbles. Let him hush.

To this holy office, you propose to devote yourselves. I wish you may feel your call in throbs of desire and hope. The office is the first in the world. It is of that reality, that it cannot suffer the deduction of any falsehood. And it is my duty to say to you, that the need was never greater of new revelation than now. From the views I have already expressed, you will infer the sad conviction, which I share, I believe, with numbers, of the universal decay and now almost death of faith in society. The soul is not preached. The Church seems to totter to its fall, almost all life extinct. On this occasion, any complaisance would be criminal, which told you, whose hope and commission it is to preach the faith of Christ, that the faith of Christ is preached.

It is time that this ill-suppressed murmur of all thoughtful men against the famine of our churches ; this moaning of the heart because it is bereaved of the consolation, the hope, the grandeur, that come alone out of the culture of the moral nature ; should be heard through the sleep of indolence, and over the din of routine. This great and perpetual office of the preacher is not discharged. Preaching is the expression of the moral sentiment in application to the duties of life. In how many churches, by how many prophets, tell me, is man made sensible that he is an infinite Soul ; that the earth and heavens are passing into his mind ; that he is drinking forever the soul of God ? Where now sounds the persuasion, that by its very melody imparadises my heart, and so affirms its own origin in heaven ? Where shall

I hear words such as in elder ages drew men to leave all and follow, — father and mother, house and land, wife and child? Where shall I hear these august laws of moral being so pronounced, as to fill my ear, and I feel ennobled by the offer of my uttermost action and passion? The test of the true faith, certainly, should be its power to charm and command the soul, as the laws of nature control the activity of the hands, — so commanding that we find pleasure and honor in obeying. The faith should blend with the light of rising and of setting suns, with the flying cloud, the singing bird, and the breath of flowers. But now the priest's Sabbath has lost the splendor of nature; it is unlovely; we are glad when it is done; we can make, we do make, even sitting in our pews, a far better, holier, sweeter, for ourselves.

Whenever the pulpit is usurped by a formalist, then is the worshipper defrauded and disconsolate. We shrink as soon as the prayers begin, which do not uplift, but smite and offend us. We are fain to wrap our cloaks about us, and secure, as best we can, a solitude that hears not. I once heard a preacher who sorely tempted me to say, I would go to church no more. Men go, thought I, where they are wont to go, else had no soul entered the temple in the afternoon. A snow-storm was falling around us. The snow-storm was real; the preacher merely spectral; and the eye felt the sad contrast in looking at him, and then out of the window behind him, into the beautiful meteor of the snow. He had lived in vain. He had no one word intimating that he had laughed or wept, was married or in love, had been commended, or cheated, or chagrined. If he had ever lived and acted, we were none the wiser for it. The capital secret of his profession, namely, to convert life into truth, he had not learned. Not one fact in all his experience, had he yet imported into his doctrine. This man had ploughed, and planted, and talked, and bought, and sold; he had read books; he had eaten and drunken; his head aches; his heart throbs; he smiles and suffers; yet was there not a surmise, a hint, in all the discourse, that he had ever lived at all. Not a line did he draw out of real history. The true preacher can be known by this, that he deals out to the people his life, — life passed through the fire of thought. But of the bad preacher, it could not be told from his sermon, what age of the world he fell in; whether he had a father or a child; whether he was a freeholder or a pauper; whether he was a citizen or a countryman; or any other fact of his biography. It seemed strange that the people should come to church. It seemed as if their houses were very unentertaining, that they should prefer this thoughtless clamor. It shows that there is a commanding attrac-

tion in the moral sentiment, that can lend a faint tint of light to dullness and ignorance, coming in its name and place. The good hearer is sure he has been touched sometimes ; is sure there is somewhat to be reached, and some word that can reach it. When he listens to these vain words, he comforts himself by their relation to his remembrance of better hours, and so they clatter and echo unchallenged.

I am not ignorant that when we preach unworthily, it is not always quite in vain. There is a good ear, in some men, that draws supplies to virtue out of very indifferent nutriment. There is poetic truth concealed in all the common-places of prayer and of sermons, and though foolishly spoken, they may be wisely heard ; for, each is some select expression that broke out in a moment of piety from some stricken or jubilant soul, and its excellency made it remembered. The prayers and even the dogmas of our church, are like the zodiac of Denderah, and the astronomical monuments of the Hindoos, wholly insulated from anything now extant in the life and business of the people. They mark the height to which the waters once rose. But this docility is a check upon the mischief from the good and devout. In a large portion of the community, the religious service gives rise to quite other thoughts and emotions. We need not chide the negligent servant. We are struck with pity, rather, at the swift retribution of his sloth. Alas for the unhappy man that is called to stand in the pulpit, and *not* give bread of life. Everything that befalls, accuses him. Would he ask contributions for the missions, foreign or domestic ? Instantly his face is suffused with shame, to propose to his parish, that they should send money a hundred or a thousand miles, to furnish such poor fare as they have at home, and would do well to go the hundred or the thousand miles to escape. Would he urge people to a godly way of living ;—and can he ask a fellow-creature to come to Sabbath meetings, when he and they all know what is the poor uttermost they can hope for therein ? Will he invite them privately to the Lord's Supper ? He dares not. If no heart warm this rite, the hollow, dry, creaking formality is too plain, than that he can face a man of wit and energy, and put the invitation without terror. In the street, what has he to say to the bold village blasphemer ? The village blasphemer sees fear in the face, form, and gait of the minister.

Let me not taint the sincerity of this plea by any oversight of the claims of good men. I know and honor the purity and strict conscience of numbers of the clergy. What life the public worship retains, it owes to the scattered company of pious men, who minister here and there in the churches, and who, sometimes accepting with too great tenderness the tenet of the elders, have not accepted from

others, but from their own heart, the genuine impulses of virtue, and so still command our love and awe, to the sanctity of character. Moreover, the exceptions are not so much to be found in a few eminent preachers, as in the better hours, the truer inspirations of all, — nay, in the sincere moments of every man. But with whatever exception, it is still true, that tradition characterizes the preaching of this country; that it comes out of the memory, and not out of the soul; that it aims at what is usual, and not at what is necessary and eternal; that thus, historical Christianity destroys the power of preaching, by withdrawing it from the exploration of the moral nature of man, where the sublime is, where are the resources of astonishment and power. What a cruel injustice it is to that Law, the joy of the whole earth, which alone can make thought dear and rich; that Law whose fatal sureness the astronomical orbits poorly emulate, that it is travestied and depreciated, that it is behooted and behowled, and not a trait, not a word of it articulated. The pulpit in losing sight of this Law, loses its reason, and gropes after it knows not what. And for want of this culture, the soul of the community is sick and faithless. It wants nothing so much as a stern, high, stoical, Christian discipline, to make it know itself and the divinity that speaks through it. (Now man is ashamed of himself; he skulks and sneaks through the world, to be tolerated, to be pitied, and scarcely in a thousand years does any man dare to be wise and good, and so draw after him the tears and blessings of his kind.)

Certainly there have been periods when, from the inactivity of the intellect on certain truths, a greater faith was possible in names and persons. The Puritans in England and America, found in the Christ of the Catholic Church, and in the dogmas inherited from Rome, scope for their austere piety, and their longings for civil freedom. But their creed is passing away, and none arises in its room. I think no man can go with his thoughts about him, into one of our churches, without feeling, that what hold the public worship had on men is gone, or going. It has lost its grasp on the affection of the good, and the fear of the bad. In the country, neighborhoods, half parishes are *signing off*, to use the local term. It is already beginning to indicate character and religion to withdraw from the religious meetings. I have heard a devout person, who prized the Sabbath, say in bitterness of heart, "On Sundays, it seems wicked to go to church." And the motive, that holds the best there, is now only a hope and a waiting. What was once a mere circumstance, that the best and the worst men in the parish, the poor and the rich, the learned and the ignorant, young and old, should meet one day as fel-

lows in one house, in sign of an equal right in the soul, has come to be a paramount motive for going thither.

My friends, in these two errors, I think, I find the causes of a decaying church and a wasting unbelief. And what greater calamity can fall upon a nation, than the loss of worship? Then all things go to decay. Genius leaves the temple, to haunt the senate, or the market. Literature becomes frivolous. Science is cold. The eye of youth is not lighted by the hope of other worlds, and age is without honor. Society lives to trifles, and when men die, we do not mention them.

And now, my brothers, you will ask, What in these desponding days can be done by us? The remedy is already declared in the ground of our complaint of the Church. We have contrasted the Church with the Soul. In the soul, then, let the redemption be sought. Wherever a man comes, there comes revolution. The old is for slaves. When a man comes, all books are legible, all things transparent, all religions are forms. He is religious. Man is the wonderworker. He is seen amid miracles. All men bless and curse. He saith yea and nay, only. The stationariness of religion; the assumption that the age of inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed; the fear of degrading the character of Jesus by representing him as a man; indicate with sufficient clearness the falsehood of our theology. It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was; that He speaketh, not spake. The true Christianity, — a faith like Christ's in the infirmity of man, — is lost. None believeth in the soul of man, but only in some man or person old and departed. Ah me! no man goeth alone. All men go in flocks to this saint or that poet, avoiding the God who seeth in secret. They cannot see in secret; they love to be blind in public. They think society wiser than their soul, and know not that one soul, and their soul, is wiser than the whole world. See how nations and races flit by on the sea of time, and leave no ripple to tell where they floated or sunk, and one good soul shall make the name of Moses, or of Zeno, or of Zoroaster, reverend forever. None assayeth the stern ambition to be the Self of the nation, and of nature, but each would be an easy secondary to some Christian scheme, or sectarian connection, or some eminent man. Once leave your own knowledge of God, your own sentiment, and take secondary knowledge, as St. Paul's, or George Fox's, or Swedenborg's, and you get wide from God with every year this secondary form lasts, and if, as now, for centuries, — the chasm yawns to that breath, that men can scarcely be convinced there is in them anything divine.

Let me admonish you, first of all, to go alone; to refuse the good

models, even those which are sacred in the imagination of men, and dare to love God without mediator or veil. Friends enough you shall find who will hold up to your emulation Wesleys and Oberlins, Saints and Prophets. Thank God for these good men, but say, 'I also am a man.' Imitation cannot go above its model. The imitator dooms himself to hopeless mediocrity. The inventor did it because it was natural to him, and so in him it has a charm. In the imitator, something else is natural, and he bereaves himself of his own beauty, to come short of another man's.

Yourself a newborn bard of the Holy Ghost, — cast behind you all conformity, and acquaint men at first hand with Deity. Look to it first and only, that fashion, custom, authority, pleasure, and money, are nothing to you, — are not bandages over your eyes, that you cannot see, — but live with the privilege of the immeasurable mind. Not too anxious to visit periodically all families and each family in your parish connection, — when you meet one of these men or women, be to them a divine man ; be to them thought and virtue ; let their timid aspirations find in you a friend ; let their trampled instincts be genially tempted out in your atmosphere ; let their doubts know that you have doubted, and their wonder feel that you have wondered. By trusting your own heart, you shall gain more confidence in other men. For all our penny-wisdom, for all our soul-destroying slavery to habit, it is not to be doubted, that all men have sublime thoughts ; that all men value the few real hours of life ; they love to be heard ; they love to be caught up into the vision of principles. We mark with light in the memory the few interviews we have had, in the dreary years of routine and of sin, with souls that made our souls wiser ; that spoke what we thought ; that told us what we knew ; that gave us leave to be what we inly were. Discharge to men the priestly office, and, present or absent, you shall be followed with their love as by an angel.

And, to this end, let us not aim at common degrees of merit. Can we not leave, to such as love it, the virtue that glitters for the commendation of society, and ourselves pierce the deep solitudes of absolute ability and worth ? We easily come up to the standard of goodness in society. Society's praise can be cheaply secured, and almost all men are content with those easy merits ; but the instant effect of conversing with God, will be, to put them away. There are persons who are not actors, not speakers, but influences ; persons too great for fame, for display ; who disdain eloquence ; to whom all we call art and artist, seems too nearly allied to show and by-ends, to the exag-geration of the finite and selfish, and loss of the universal. The ora-

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tors, the poets, the commanders encroach on us only as fair women do, by our allowance and homage. Slight them by preoccupation of mind, slight them, as you can well afford to do, by high and universal aims, and they instantly feel that you have right, and that it is in lower places that they must shine. They also feel your right; for they with you are open to the influx of the all-knowing Spirit, which annihilates before its broad noon the little shades and gradations of intelligence in the compositions we call wiser and wisest.

In such high communion, let us study the grand strokes of rectitude: a bold benevolence, an independence of friends, so that not the unjust wishes of those who love us, shall impair our freedom, but we shall resist for truth's sake the freest flow of kindness, and appeal to sympathies far in advance; and, — what is the highest form in which we know this beautiful element, — a certain solidity of merit, that has nothing to do with opinion, and which is so essentially and manifestly virtue, that it is taken for granted, that the right, the brave, the generous step will be taken by it, and nobody thinks of commending it. You would compliment a coxcomb doing a good act, but you would not praise an angel. The silence that accepts merit as the most natural thing in the world, is the highest applause. Such souls, when they appear, are the Imperial Guard of Virtue, the perpetual reserve, the dictators of fortune. One needs not praise their courage, — they are the heart and soul of nature. O my friends, there are resources in us on which we have not drawn. There are men who rise refreshed on hearing a threat; men to whom a crisis which intimidates and paralyzes the majority, — demanding not the faculties of prudence and thrift, but comprehension, immovableness, the readiness of sacrifice, — comes graceful and beloved as a bride. Napoleon said to Massena, that he was not himself until the battle began to go against him; then, when the dead began to fall in ranks around him, awoke his powers of combination, and he put on terror and victory as a robe. So it is in rugged crises, in unweariable endurance, and in aims which put sympathy out of question, that the angel is shown. But these are heights that we can scarce remember and look up to, without contrition and shame. Let us thank God that such things exist.

And now let us do what we can to rekindle the smouldering, nigh quenched fire on the altar. The evils of the church that now is are manifest. The question returns, What shall we do? I confess, all attempts to project and establish a Cultus with new rites and forms, seem to me vain. Faith makes us, and not we it, and faith makes its own forms. All attempts to contrive a system are as cold as the new

worship introduced by the French to the goddess of Reason,—to-day, pasteboard and fillagree, and ending to-morrow in madness and murder. Rather let the breath of new life be breathed by you through the forms already existing. For, if once you are alive, you shall find they shall become plastic and new. The remedy to their deformity is, first, soul, and second, soul, and evermore, soul. A whole pope-dom of forms, one pulsation of virtue can uplift and vivify. Two inestimable advantages Christianity has given us ; first ; the Sabbath, the jubilee of the whole world ; whose light dawns welcome alike into the closet of the philosopher, into the garret of toil, and into prison-cells, and everywhere suggests, even to the vile, the dignity of spiritual being. Let us stand forevermore, a temple, which new love, new faith, new sight, shall restore to more than its first splendor to mankind. And secondly, the institution of preaching, —the speech of man to men, —essentially the most flexible of all organs, of all forms. What hinders that now, everywhere, in pulpits, in lecture-rooms, in houses, in fields, wherever the invitation of men or your own occasions lead you, you speak the very truth, as your life and conscience teach it, and cheer the waiting, fainting hearts of men with new hope and new revelation ?

I look for the hour when that supreme Beauty, which ravished the souls of those eastern men, and chiefly of those Hebrews, and through their lips spoke oracles to all time, shall speak in the West also. The Hebrew and Greek Scriptures contain immortal sentences, that have been bread of life to millions. But they have no epical integrity ; are fragmentary ; are not shown in their order to the intellect. I look for the new Teacher, that shall follow so far those shining laws, that he shall see them come full circle ; shall see their rounding complete grace ; shall see the world to be the mirror of the soul ; shall see the identity of the law of gravitation with purity of heart ; and shall show that the Ought, that Duty, is one thing with Science, with Beauty, and with Joy.

BOND OR FREE.*

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"SO SPEAK YE AND SO DO, AS THEY THAT SHALL BE JUDGED BY THE LAW OF LIBERTY."

THE great religious question of the ages is that between Outward Authority and Inward Freedom. May we trust the free exercise of our natural faculties to give us the knowledge of Duty and of God, or does such freedom come to nothing but delusion, and must we have supernatural teachers; creeds sent down from above ready made for our acceptance, not our investigation; sects, churches and books clothed with an authority that makes our liberty needless as well as wrong? What is Religion? Is it blind belief in a Power that comes in between our human life and God's divine, to unite what have no natural connection with each other, or is it the intimacy of the soul with its Maker and its own inmost Life?

These are opposite principles which I indicate. They exclude each other. If one is true, the other is false. If our souls may be trusted in the search for truth, then we do not need and cannot have authoritative teachers, creeds, churches, books. If they may not be trusted, then we do need these. It is a question as to the structure of human nature itself. Are we so made that we must take religious truth from infallible teachers, or are we so made that, whatever we may think, no such infallible teachers are possible for us, and we must and do depend upon individual reason and conscience, and attain positive certainty just in proportion as we make these mature and free? The two principles exclude one another. If we are made for the one, then the other must disprove itself, and perish utterly. If that of Outward Authority prevail, all moral and intellectual growth is at an end, and the faculties will stiffen in death: for a final authoritative creed must at last be established, not to be changed by human reason, nor improved by human sympathies. If the principle of Inward Freedom prevail, the Religious Nature will affirm the access of every seeking soul to God, set aside the very idea of a supernatural Lord and Master, and refuse all pledges which compromise progress, and all associated action which cramps individual freedom.

History is the field on which these principles contend. Human Nature is to decide which is in accordance with its laws. Before the answer could be given, it was necessary that society should learn its inmost needs, that man should gradually grow to self-comprehension. In past ages the principle of Outward Authority has been dominant. It has been represented in many forms, through many religions, each having its own creeds, churches, Christs. But the advancing experience of mankind has brought fresh sense of liberty and inspiration. The maturity of the spirit will not be fed and

* A Discourse preached May 14th, 1865, at the Free Church in Lynn, Mass.

clothed like its childhood, nor dwell in its early illusions. It is the work of this age to test utterly the principle of Inward Freedom.

Eighteen Christian centuries have settled conclusively, that the earlier principle is a failure. It has run through all its necessary stages. It has revealed its inevitable tendencies and stands convicted by its results. It began under the best auspices possible for such a principle. It began its decisive expression in the Proem to the Gospel of John, elevating to supernatural and even divine sovereignty over the human Mind, as the Only-begotten Son and Incarnate Word of God, the purest Saint in history, the Man who best of all men that ever lived deserved to hold such authority, were it right that any should hold it. The Catholic Church is its history. It ends in the papal Encyclic Letter of December 1864, denouncing every form of liberty and every aspiration of civilized beings, in the name of Christ: — the Papal Encyclic, the laughing stock of Christendom.

And Christendom may well laugh. But the Papacy is perfectly consistent with the principle of Outward Authority. It is Protestant Christendom only that is inconsistent with its own premises.

This principle requires the organization of the whole race under one official Head, one authoritative Organ of Truth and Life. This necessity was at once recognized. Jesus of Nazareth, before his name had penetrated beyond a few cities of the Roman Empire, before he was regarded by Roman society as more than the leader of a Jewish faction, was declared by his followers the sole appointed Redeemer of Mankind, the official Representative and express Image of God on Earth. Through Him, as the Christ, prayers must be offered, from him doctrine descend, by him truth be certified, on him all religious union be based.* The Nicene creed, in perfect consistency with this, declared him consubstantial with the Father, and denounced the Arians, who believed him to be a created being. It took only three hundred years for the principle of Outward Authority to reach its doctrinal perfection.

The practical organization of the Church on the same basis was a slower work, but proceeded steadily forward.

Here too, the whole World must be consolidated under One Head, representative of the God-Man. This is perfectly consistent and necessary, as growing out of the very idea of an official Christ.

The overseers of the earliest Christian Churches, called bishops, were appointed by the apostles, as representatives of their Head. Though this leaven of authority left them for a while equal, and allowed the voice of the people to be heard in the selection of their successors, it soon availed itself of the power of organization, and bound all the churches of a single city or a single province together, under the control of a single Bishop. Of these two classes of Bishops, in due time, the provincial became subordinate to the metropolitan. These last were originally of equal authority, each being entitled pontifex and pope. But they gradually yielded to that necessity of

* In the 1st Epistle to Timothy, ii : 6 ; it is expressly defined, "There is One God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus."

a single Head from which they originated, and did homage to the Pontiff of Rome. The principle of Outward Authority required that he also, from being the chosen leader of the people, the creature of the combined will of the people, the clergy and the Emperor, should overbear all these divided Powers and become that absolute Ecclesiastical Sovereign who alone could represent the monarchical right of the Christ. Although the territorial possessions of the Pope were limited, he consistently claimed supreme direction of the consciences of princes in all temporal affairs. He became what the theory justified, the vicar of the official Head of Mankind, of the sole Mediator between God and Man.

Yet to effect this required the steady consolidating work of more than a thousand years. "It was seven hundred years before the Papacy reached temporal power: seven hundred more before it secured the guarantees of this." See how persistent was the effort of this principle of Outward Authority; how it put forth all its resources in human nature; yet how hard for it to win the mastery of mankind! Four hundred years it has stood in its complete form. And every successive year it has grown weaker in substance. The day that saw the Churches organized thoroughly on this basis, saw it begin to dissolve. Catholic Supremacy and Protestant Schism entered the world at one and the same time.

See what violence the Papacy found it necessary to do to Human Nature. Long before, had it broken down the liberties of the Roman people. In the twelfth century, it burned Arnold of Brescia, to abolish in him the idea of a republic of universal brotherhood. In Galileo it rejected Science; in Giordano Bruno, Philosophy; in Savonarola, Morality. ¶ In Italy it trampled out Nationality, and made Patriotism everywhere its foe. In Jesuitism and the Inquisition it allied itself with Hate and Falsehood, whose sole function is to disorganize society. It denied every revelation as it came. It set itself against every movement of the Spirit, despised every prophecy of Science and of Love. How should it, as Outward Authority, do otherwise? Its business was to crystallize, not to vitalize. Its savor was of death. Its march was to suicide.

And so at last comes Pio Nono, the final *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole principle. As if to make its fatuity the more startling by a downfall from unimagined heights, he begins with the effort to reconcile it with progress, granting liberty of speech, allowing political newspapers and a National Guard, diffusing education, favoring scientific societies, subscribing a comparatively liberal Constitution: — then recoils from the overthrow which these concessions threaten to the authority by which he stands — and ends with the Encyclic anathema against every form of free thought and free institution which ever was or ever can be devised by man. This poor turncoat is the latest form of an Infallible Guide to Human Reason. This ruler, fleeing from his throne at the rising of liberty in his own dominions, returning with French bayonets to murder a republic, and opening his new sway with inquisitorial courts and tyrannical penalties, is the representative of that absolute authority, claimed to have been vested in Jesus, the Martyr of Liberty and Love! *However vested, to this it must come.*

In this Encyclic Letter the principle of Outward Authority reaches its perfection and its close.

To all patriarchs and bishops it announces that the modern principle of '*Naturalism*,' which separates Church from State, freeing the latter from control by the former, — is "impious and absurd, and makes no distinction between heresy and religion:" that "to call liberty of conscience and worship the right of every man is hurtful to the safety of the Catholic Church:" that our excellent predecessor, Gregory XVI, termed it *delirium*, — and that "it is to preach the liberty of perdition, since if there is freedom of discussion, there will not be wanting men who will struggle against the Truth." It complains that the doctrines of the Roman pontiffs are not allowed to bind the conscience, unless promulgated by the civil power, and that the Church is forbidden to punish violations of sacred laws with civil penalties. It proceeds to proscribe eighty errors of our time, comprehending in the common curse every phase which freedom of thought has assumed; — Atheism, Pantheism, Materialism, Rationalism, Protestantism alike, Indifferentism, liberalism, toleration are equally bad. It is a grievous error to hold that men should be "free to embrace the religion they may believe true," that "men of every religion may be saved" — and that "the salvation of non-catholics may be *hoped for*." It is criminal to believe that Catholic countries should grant freedom of worship to immigrants, or that the Pope ought to reconcile himself with progress and civilization." And the Holy Father, by virtue of plenary power derived to him from Jesus Christ, commands all Catholics "to hold such opinions as proscribed and condemned."

This is not to break with civilization. It is of course to bury the principle of Outward Authority *under* civilization in eternal death. This is properly the end of it. This is its suicide.

Every European nation except Austria, receives the edict with contempt. Even Spain repudiates it. Archbishop McCloskey calls American Catholics to admire it — being permitted to do so only through the very toleration it condemns! The spectacle of two monstrous Falsehoods perishing by their own act, and in their very lairs, is before us. Social Slavery is slain at Richmond. Ecclesiastical Slavery at Rome. The destruction of both is absolute, for it is logical. It is foreordained death. They perish through the consistent evolution of their principle to its perfect form.

The Encyclic is not a whit more absurd and impracticable than it is faithful to the principle of Outward Authority. It was contained, predicted, necessitated, in the assumption of the Gospel of John that there is or can be *one* absolute Incarnate Word, in whose person is concentrated all Truth, through whom doctrine must be certified, and on whom religious union must be based. It matters not how false this was to the true purpose of Jesus. It matters not how pure, how loving, how democratic, how unwilling to be idolized or divinized he may have been. The principle was equally fatal. The moment his followers, misconceiving the unselfish soul that would fain have taught men freedom, turned him in imagination

into an official personage, "the Christ," the sole representative of Divine Infallibility on earth, it became a necessity that he should be a substitute for the perils of human fallibility. *There was His Word*, which, being official, must be absolute in its authority and not to be questioned nor tested on pain of divine displeasure. If he was this official Christ, it is perfectly true that we have no right so to inquire or test. He became the authorized subverter of human progress, of inward freedom. And all independent exercise of the intellectual faculties in matters of religion is a revolt against his jurisdiction. Why was such *official* Mediator sent, if the reason and conscience could be trusted? The principle has but run its natural course. The Encyclic of Pio Nono is the sign that the doctrine of a supernatural Christ is essentially at war with the civilization of the Age.

Look at the blossoms bursting from every living bough this radiant spring day, and then at the hard compact rock that never opens to the light. Every atom in the tree is alike living and free, every atom of the rock is compressed and dead. Outward Authority consolidates. Its organizations compress mankind with dead mechanical force. Inward Freedom separates the individual souls, as vital centres of growth, and capacities of inspiration. It is like the penetrative heat which disintegrates the solid granite, and frees the atoms again into living constituents of fertility. It is like the current which stirs the dead lake, and heaves it into separate waves and interfering circles, turning stagnation into healthful movement. It allows organization only as a free combination of forces which retain their natural energies unimpaired. It connects the individual with society not as the piston is part of the machine, but as the lark is part of the morning; not as the atom is part of the crystal, but as the seed is part of the perfect flower. It is native and structural in us, and its day dawns with the advent of our spiritual maturity.

Protestantism was Inward Freedom, not indeed in the true principle, but in the germ thereof. It was the law of disintegration, working within the crystallizations of Outward Authority as soon as they were formed. Its history has been the multiplication of sects. Its lesson has been the vanity of attempting to organize upon a doctrinal basis. It has clung to the old dogma of an official Christ, and Infallible Head of the Church and of the Race, and yet incessantly denies this, by progress, by schism, by new interpretations, unauthorized but by the very freedom which it forbids. Nearer and nearer it approaches individualism, and there were never so many sects in Christendom as now. It has unconsciously deserted the old principle, yet refuses to accept the new, which is at once impelling and dissolving it. To insult and suppress that Human Nature, which is forever against Slavery, is a task imposed on Protestants also. In the very same breath in which they claim liberty of thought and conscience, they denounce the Nature in which these inhere as radically impotent, depraved and doomed. They curse the very organs they live by. It is the necessity of Outward Authority to act thus; in some form to do dishonor to the Soul.

But Protestantism is not suffered to defeat the Purpose that created it.

Science is a second impulse of Inward Freedom. It has struck at the infallibility of the historical Christ and written Word. It has exalted the ever-present laws of Nature, and set aside the supernaturalism which was the strongest argument for an official Head of the Race. It has equalized men before a common sovereignty in a Divine Order, and so opened the way for them to comprehend the full rights and dignities of the individual conscience. It has directed the religious sentiment to the present instead of the past, to living energies, to the beauty of growth, to the gladness of research, discovery, scientific prediction. It has released the faculties from the theological curse. It has suggested a future of boundless possibilities, and aroused an emulation in pursuit of the Unknown, which makes every sincere student and thinker, a possible teacher of somewhat divinely helpful and fair.

Social Revolutions are a third impulse. Are not the public destinies, these stately and awful marches of retribution and regeneration, a revelation of the Living God before which all records and traditions pale? What authority in church or creed can stand before a fire which is purging every institution and kindling all living consciences with unprecedented convictions?

And finally comes *the Inmost Teaching of the Spirit to the Individual Soul*: the intellectual and moral light that illumines it from a higher source than any Lord or Master, more interior than any spoken or written Word: the sense of immediate access to Truth in its purity and absoluteness, by the innate relation of the mind to Deity, — the delight in perfect freedom as the only way not only to the love of Truth, but to the glad certainty which attends it: the dear assurance of help and guidance such as only the Maker's intimate Presence could give: the inborn solemnity of our responsibilities and opportunities; the sacredness of spiritual relations into which no human organizations can intrude, which no divine official can reach, and which can be fulfilled only by the free love and service of an Indwelling God.

No Master but the Maker: no Church but Progress and Liberty: no creed to walk by but the Eternal Laws of Love and Righteousness which are new, within and around us, forevermore: therefore, no official religious authority in any Being that ever wore the form of Man. Such surely the condition of the Religious Life as it stands in our dearest experience. Such the liberty, theology, piety, which is to meet the needs of the coming time.

It is not negation: it is not isolation. Because it is individualism, and is not based on institutions, it is not therefore selfish nor self-centred. It recognizes the past; but it draws its life from the present. It stands in the issues of all ages; but it knows that the energy by which it divines their meaning and appropriates their good, is in private inspiration. And just as the coral is dead solid rock except at its extremity, where it is emancipated into individual life, beautiful and intense, — so it is for us to let the past rest, as that which *was* life, but now is life no longer, and feel that every

soul has its own fair function to fulfil, nearest the light, and as a part of that Present in which all vital forces centre.

"The Spirit's fulness we embrace ; away with Man's poor dole :
The sweetest visit of Thy grace asks but an open soul.
Full feels our solemn privacy the calm celestial air :
In humble joy we lay on Thee the loving clasp of prayer."

What then shall we say of this which I proceed to recount ? The representatives of the most liberal sect in Christendom, the Unitarian, met some weeks since in New York. They were men educated in the largest light and liberty of the age. They were men who had denied the divinity of Jesus, every one. They were men who had dared to speculate on the Bible and the Church, in a manner utterly unwarrantable, if free individualism is not the way to truth, and the basis of communion. They knew themselves to be infidels in the sight of nearly all Christendom, because their speculations had been inconsistent with the frank recognition of an infallible Teacher, of an official outward authority representative of God on earth. They knew that Religion was natural, that the faculties were not unworthy of confidence, nor under a curse, but the appointed organs for seeking, testing, and appropriating Truth.

And yet they dared not unite for practical work in the noble fields of this our great social regeneration, without fastening around their necks a confession, which implied such a dependence on the old dogmas of officialism as could not be acceptable to many of the most intelligent and devout men with whom they had been associated. They practically resolved to unite only with those who call Jesus 'the Lord Christ' and their Christian work 'the building up of His Kingdom,' as that of 'the Son of God.' They insisted on phrases which, if they do not mean the official sovereignty of Jesus, as they have always heretofore, — mean nothing, and are a poor mask to deceive other sects into yielding an unmerited respect. They refused to drop the name Unitarian, and left it defined in this sectarian and ecclesiastical way. Too wise utterly to deny progress, yet too weak to dare its path, they tried to steer between authority and freedom. They rejected resolutions which presented official and mediatorial Christianity in a comparatively consistent way ; and yet, when asked to co-operate with all Churches doing *Christian* work, in the broad and simple sense of 'the Love of God and Man,' preferred to drop out this free definition of Christianity, already identified with the heresy of Theodore Parker and others, and to pass the resolution of co-operation in a form which left the old officialism in the conditions of communion undisturbed. And so they repeated the old perversity of which their sect was guilty in the case of Mr. Parker : being tested again, and again found wanting : clinging to outward authority as against inward freedom and yet fearing to accept it in its logical truth : like that Church of Laodicea, neither cold nor hot, which the Spirit was fain to spue out of its mouth.

There were men in this Convention, who believed in a nobler trust in God and Man. They were silenced, overawed or outvoted. Mr. Wasson objected to a form of words thrust between the soul and God. Mr. Ames of Albany, who proposed the liberal definition of Christianity above mentioned, consented to drop it at the suggestion of a conservative layman. Robert Collyer objected to serving on a committee to carry out the plan of co-operation thus narrowed to a creed. Others of like sentiment sat silent, probably seeing the uselessness of protest. The laymen of the Convention voted almost in a body for the illiberal policy, under the leadership of Dr. Bellows, who held up before them the claims and dignities of "instituted religion," and the terrors of a Christianity without Christ. He let them understand that he preferred Calvinism to the unhappy status thus designated. The Convention shared his preference for institution over inspiration, for authority over liberty. It was he who a few years since described Unitarianism as in a suspense of faith, and announced the 'absence of any further road' in the direction of that individual freedom, whereto its face was supposed to be turned. The Unitarians seem to have endorsed this valuable revelation, and wheeled about accordingly, or at least, pleased with a style of strategy to which we have already been introduced in the military sphere, proceeded to entrench themselves before the frowning Yorktowns that barred the road of Liberty. This unready commander informed them that the time had not come for a Broad Christian Church. They accepted his report of the divine request for a little delay, and kindly granted it.

Dr. Bellows seems to have awed the Convention into sectarian propriety. Dr. Clarke did what gentle management could do towards inaugurating what is called in politics an 'era of good feeling.' He enlarged so eloquently on the practical good work to be done, that many of the members forgot to ask whether it was not possible that such work might also be done outside the Unitarian body, and whether in subtly assuming that the unity of that body *must* of necessity be maintained, they were not slighting their duty to the cause of intellectual and spiritual freedom. Dr. Clarke was certainly as well suited as any one for the function of mediator between the sharp diversities of belief and purpose that were likely to appear. He had on the one hand, just gained fresh respect from the conservatives by repudiating all sympathy with the intellectual and religious radicalism of Mr. Emerson; while on the other, his well-earned reputation for practical earnestness in moral reforms and for kindly personal qualities, gave him a cordial hearing from the liberal thought of the denomination. Under his mild manipulation protest measurably subsided, and a conservative policy triumphed in the name of a noble liberality. But it harmonized no differences. Nor can the principle of Freedom be so evaded and put to sleep.

The result seems to have been, that while in outward appearance there was harmony, while the sect makes an imposing figure by its unanimity and largeness of plan, while the shrewd managers, having carried through the Convention a confession of essentially orthodox belief, are busy in impressing upon the more radical portion of the community, and laying it as an

unction to their own consciences, that there was really no creed after all,—the more progressive members are mortified and indignant at the part they are made to play.

I am sure of this from personal conversation with some of them, and from the reports, published and private of others. As one who has no part in theological organizations, I may be permitted to say, that the result seems to me no worse than they had reason to expect. The principle of Inward Freedom cannot be established, until its supporters let the sects understand that they have sufficient faith in individual power to be willing to test it in their own persons. I cannot but think that such men are out of place in such an organization, however earnest their purpose to convert and save it. The new wine to new bottles; the new cloth should be a whole garment, not a patch in the old. Possibly an established theological sect may be converted in part from within; though mainly, I am persuaded, such redeeming force must come from without; since it is the organization itself and its real necessities of self-defence, which constitute the chief obstacle to growth. And at all events, they who see that it is so, are called to act from a position consistent with that perception. They forsake their vantage of thought and work in appealing to sectarian combination in the name of individual liberty. Theological organizations crumble, by force of laws more potent than their appeals. And an individual soul is not weak, nor unaided, nor unprofitable, because it works without organized doctrinal co-operation. Let that come in due time, if it will: but let the soul at least speak its full word to-day.

It is good for our more radical Unitarian friends to hear their associates who represent a traditional religion congratulating themselves now, that progress was repudiated, that radicalism was rebuked, that the Unitarian name at last, stands firm 'on the basis of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.' It at least relieves them of an unnatural bond. There can be no doubt that this policy has lost the little sect its most earnest, able and courageous members, the men who gave it distinctive significance among christian sects. They can hardly be found hereafter in a special communion, whose members scrupulously strain out the statement of Christianity dearest to the free heart of Him they call their Master, as "an attempt to *define* Religion," yet swallow the camel of a dogmatic confession of faith.

There were some things in the tone of this Convention which recall the vanity and self-sufficiency of the older sects. There was an implication in its proceedings that somehow the Spirit of God was there, waiting to be carried over to outsiders, who were supposed to be perishing for the lack of its special ideas of "sitting at Jesus' feet." The sermon of Dr. Clarke described the duty of Unitarians as a "change of base," a carrying the gospel over to heretics, as Paul's work was to carry early Christianity over to the Gentiles, to show them that they could be Christians without being orthodox in doctrine, and so on. However kindly meant this style of liberality may be, it is certainly a bold flight of fancy to conceive of heretics and outsiders as needing to be instructed of Unitarians in the freedom of the Spirit. As if the churches had not been false and narrow and reluctant, while heretic and

comeouter were ever hastening on before, to greet the new light and life as it came! The tone is most unbecoming, and indicates a singular blindness to the facts of the time. It comes of the assumption that Religion is traditional and ecclesiastical; that revelation comes through institutions rather than through inspiration; the delusion of all authoritative churches, but hardly consistent with the conduct of a sect which has been the Protestant of Protestants.

I may be charged with singling out the spots in this Convention, and ignoring its radiance. I reply that it is not my purpose to do more than state its relation to the question between Outward Authority and Inward Freedom. And in illustration of this, let me say further that there seems to have been a great deal said or implied, about certain duties of "keeping out" and "taking in," as if God's fold were a sheep-pen and not the spiritual universe; as if His Church had doors which a self-appointed committee of Christians had power to open or shut! Worse than this was the aristocratic tone of some of the speakers, as if entrance to this lofty corporation was actually a step in social position, and as if it was something indecorous to offer an indiscriminate fellowship! This was but the relic of an inbred mania for respectable standing, incident to the circumstances in which the sect grew up, which it is really fast escaping. The Convention was not responsible for it, except in so far as it took courage to itself, from the manifest fear of the majority to assume a brave democratic attitude. To put away true democracy from a Church in this day, is as though the bubbles should deny the sea on which they float.

All these things more or less glaringly misrepresent the age. They of course convince no outsider of the duty to join in sectarian organization: for the most advanced sect to make such exhibition of its quality is to repel us more than ever. They show, with great force, the inconsistency of doctrinal organizations with the principle of Inward Freedom. And the Unitarian Convention is the feeble and inconsequent attempt to *reconcile* with the spirit of the age that authoritative religion which the Encyclic Letter presents in bold and consistent defiance thereof. It places the dogma of a King anointed to rule the individual soul in *the full blaze* of our nineteenth century, nay, of our American, spiritual liberty: — not, as the Papacy does, *outside and over against it*. I believe it is there in order that we may see it shrivel in those divine fires. It exemplifies the folly of organizing religious union on a theological basis; of building a church on a creed. It is time to escape the old dread of a religion that stands only in the individual conviction; the old pretence of priesthood that to be a citizen of the heavenly kingdom one must be the member of an organized ecclesiastical body, and that God does not speak to men through the private soul, but through institutions and associated action only. It is time to trust the soul; time to see that till one shall have done that, he is not fit to be a free member of any Church, but only to be the slave of a religious despotism; that the pledge to his fellow men to hold on to a dogma will never teach him to walk alone. It is time to recognize the right of the Living and Present God alone to our vows of obedience

and of Humanity alone to form the bounds of our communion. A free mind will refuse all pledges of belief in the face of men save to that liberty which holds it open to new teaching. It will refuse to make its theological conviction the basis of its religious sympathy. Its religion will indeed be social. Its communion will shape itself into a Church. But the Church shall be open as Brotherhood; it shall be free of doctrinal pledges between man and man; free of claim to bind and loose; free to every earnest word the Spirit sends the Age. It shall say to every one;—this union is not for the purpose of binding your thought or suppressing your honest doubt; of teaching you to conform, or imitate or follow guides; but to help you into self-knowledge, self-respect, and perfect liberty to find and obey the Truth: not to make you confess Lords and Masters, or put on Greek and Hebrew labels; but to aid you in your moral endeavors, your devout aspirations, your genuine affections, and your humane work.

This is what we, friends, have meant by a Church: what we have tried to make this Church stand for; and what we mean to make it stand for, I trust, more and more perfectly, as long as it shall stand at all. You have bravely sustained it, under many difficulties, some of you for the whole twelve years that have passed since we opened its public religious services; years of struggle with such obstacles as must beset every free movement in its beginning; years also of increasing confidence. It is not for us to estimate our success. But at least we will all of us be right in purpose. We will stand on an Eternal Rock. We will greet the whole Present as it is, and obey its voice. The morning calls us with clearest golden light and bracing air, to walk in this love and liberty, and it shall not call in vain.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

SECOND PAPER.—ITS PRIMITIVE OBSERVANCE.

THE disciples seem to have understood Jesus to institute a perpetual memorial of himself. Yet they were not infallible, and it is admitted that they sometimes grossly misinterpreted the Master's words. Undisciplined in the observation of facts, and carried away with the torrent of feeling, it was most natural for them to have gone beyond the precept. Calling to mind the last supper, and the words "Do this in remembrance of me," it would be surprising if they had not put their fond and worshipful regard into an established ritual. Yet no ritual is created complete at once. It grows up almost or quite unconsciously.

There is something most charming in the *child-likeness* of the primitive disciples in their earliest days. For a little time after the Pentecostal outpouring, there was, for once, a universal Christian communion. The disciples had all things in common, we are told, those who had possessions selling them, and laying down the price at the apostles' feet. So "distribution

was made unto every man according as he had need." One of the most marked features of the new religious society, was the close attachment, and affectionate regard of the members for one another. The characteristic was not wholly lost for centuries. So long as the Nazārenes continued despised and persecuted, they were very dear to one another. To manifest their brotherly love constituted a part of their religious service. The fact must strike us, moderns and occidentals, as strange, if not incredible. Nevertheless, it was certainly so. In the Love-feast, of which I shall speak more fully in another place, sociability was enjoyed apart from the properly religious or devotional element; but, at first, the Lord's supper was the grand occasion of communing with one another, as well as with Christ and God. I shall take particular pains to bring into view the social element, as it is the one which, in our day, is almost entirely overlooked. Throughout the New Testament, we can but observe the prominence of personal affection. "Greet one another with the holy kiss," says Paul; and whole chapters of his epistles are taken up with salutations. Without entering into the affectionate spirit which animated the Apostolic church, it were impossible to understand their celebration of the Lord's supper. With an appreciation of it, a religious supper would seem to be almost a necessity, irrespective of any command or suggestion on the part of Jesus. The picture furnished us in the second chapter of Acts may be too highly colored, but we cannot help feeling that it conveys, on the whole, a just impression. "And they (the new converts) continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they continuing daily, with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Observe that these people were "*living religion*." Their whole life was taken up into their Christianity. Fellowship was put beside doctrine, and breaking bread beside prayer; while the public service in the temple seemed scarcely so sacred as their eating together in private houses with joyful and simple hearts. From the narrative, it would not appear that they did not have the communion three times a day; though it is probable that it was only the supper, the principal meal of the day, which assumed a religious character.

It is important to notice that the Lord's supper was celebrated every day. It is not unlikely that Jesus meant to suggest that he should be tenderly remembered once a year, at the Passover supper. But glowing affection sets itself no ordinary bounds. To those in whose minds Jesus was still so really living, every day seemed none too often to eat and drink, in his name; and everything led to the consecration, for this purpose, of the chief meal, the supper.

It seems generally to be thought that, though the Lord's supper was partaken of by the primitive church in connection with an actual meal, yet itself was apart and subsequent to it, a sort of appendage to the proper meal.

This is a theory with no facts for its support. It was invented to justify our modern communion ceremonies, which are but grim anatomies of those living and genial suppers the primitive church enjoyed. In the very passage which I have quoted, and in an immediate connection with the breaking of bread from house to house, it says that "they did eat their meat with gladness." It was no show of eating, and no mere breaking of bread, but a hearty meal which constituted their Lord's supper. "It was a social meal," says Prof. Stanley, "where the hungry looked forward to satisfying their wants. It was a supper, that is, not merely a morsel of bread, and a drop of wine, taken in the early morning, or in the seclusion of the Eastern noon, but the regular substantial meal of the day; a supper at the usual hour after the sun had set, and therefore in its time, as well as in its festive accompaniments, recalling the night of the original institution. It seemed the most fitting expression of the whole Christian life, where all things, "whether they ate or drank," could be done "to the glory of God."

After a time, the Lord's supper was celebrated no longer on every day, but only on the first day of the week. Yet the character of the meal was not thereby changed. It was still enjoyed in the evening. A little incident in the life of Paul brings before us one of these Christian gatherings. Paul, having revisited Troas, was about to depart early on Monday morning. Sunday evening the disciples came together, as their custom was, to break bread. With us, the principal service is that of preaching. In the age of the apostles the grand occasion was the breaking of bread. In its prominence, the social evening meal was to the primitive church, what the mass is to the Roman Catholic. Many torches were burning in that large Supper room in Troas, and the meeting was unusually solemn and impressive, because the great Apostle, the spiritual Father of those believers, was about to take his leave, never, perhaps, to see their faces more. The interesting group listened to the earnest words of Paul, and could not separate till the break of day. The Lord's supper is here identified with that in which Paul takes the necessary nourishment for setting out upon his journey. Prof. Stanley remarks that the word "eaten," in this connection, implies making a meal. The peculiar circumstances in which the disciples came together at this time to break bread, prevented the occasion from being, as it usually was, a joyful one. Yet the social element was most prominent. Combined with the religious character was precisely that significance which we attach to the giving of a generous banquet to a departing guest.

In order to see how free and easy, how eminently social and human, the primitive Lord's supper was, it is necessary for us to glance at some abuses which crept into the observance in the church at Corinth. Paul writes to the church how he has heard that divisions and contentions have arisen through the very supper which is calculated to promote unity and brotherly love. He begins by assuring them that to come together and eat to that end, is not to observe the Lord's supper. He suggests that many of them have been more intent upon gratifying their own appetites, than in discharging a Christian duty. The distinctions of wealth and rank had found place

at the common table ; the rich had withheld their good things from the poor, so that while one was unprovided for, another was eating and drinking to excess. It appears from this, that it was the custom for all the members of the brotherhood to bring with them, according to their means and convenience, the provision for the supper, and to spread the contents of their several baskets upon the common table. But careless of the poor, selfish and vain, the rich had so set out their delicacies as to be able to keep them among themselves. Or, like greedy children, some had hastened immediately on their arrival, to appropriate the best of the feast, to the annoyance and grief of those who came in later. Now, the bare possibility of eating to excess, and drinking to intoxication, is sufficient to indicate the total unlikeness of the Lord's supper then and now. Evidently a church tea-party much more nearly answers to the apostolical supper, than the stiff and empty ceremony which we call the communion. It is not only in respect to quantity and variety of food and drink that the two suppers are in contrast. Consider how radically they differ in all the social elements which should characterize the meeting and communion of friends. To think of engaging in cheerful conversation with the friend at your elbow in the modern service ! Evidently there is no thought of sociability in the latter, while it was most prominent in the former. That which in our day would most resemble the breaking of bread in the primitive church, would be the meeting in their hall of an Enthusiastic Secret Society to partake of a supper in honor of a distinguished and beloved leader. Yet there would still be lacking something which would have to be sought for in the ease and simplicity of a picnic made up of congenial friends or related families. And this in turn might be wanting in the Religious element.

How unfortunate it is that the Christian church has inherited the solemn rebuke of Paul, without the kind of observance to which his stern words apply. I cannot help thinking that the zealous apostle, in his conscientious endeavor to correct an abuse, went to the other extreme. Strictly to follow his injunctions, and vividly to call up the scene of the betrayal, would induce a solemnity irreconcilable with sociability. Hitherto, a genial intercourse had characterized the common meal of brotherly love and tender remembrance. Hereafter, the mind was to be fixed upon the last hours of the departed, and on subjects of purely religious contemplation. Unconsciously, perhaps, Paul inaugurated the movement which result in sundering the Love-feast from the Lord's Supper and in erecting the latter into a solemn sacrament. No wonder that the Apostle was thoroughly indignant at the desecration, and that he should have used strong terms to set forth the enormity of it. Aiming simply at terrifying the careless and selfish, of course the picture of the supper, as he draws it, is very partial both in detail and coloring. Whatever is written for a particular end is inevitably shaped to fit that end. It is because the whole truth is not in point when a single duty or lesson is to be enforced. I cannot think that Paul wished to make the supper a solemn and unsocial one. It only is certain that he would have the serious meaning and associations of the occasion check the frivolity and rudeness of those Corinthians.

DANIEL BOWEN.

SONNETS.

PRIDE.

COULD one ascend with an unheard-of flight,
And skyward, skyward, without limit soar,
As if the pinion of a god he wore,
Till earth were left a dwindling star, whose light
Flew faint upon his track, at last his height
All height would vanquish; there in deeps of space,
Were neither upper nor inferior place,
Distinction's little zone below him quite.
Oh happy dreams of such a soul have I,
And softly to my heart of him I sing,
Whose seraph pride, all pride doth overwing,
Soars unto meekness, reaches low by high,
And, as in grand equalities of the sky,
Stands level with the beggar and the king.

THE GUESTS.

KNOW thou, O friend, that vainly on the ear,
Vainly as golden pollen on the sea,
Fall hints of the supernal mysteries,
Save as the soul itself with equal worth
Extend them hospitality. For truths,
Royal, a royal welcome must receive.
They are no common travellers, nor come,
With purse at girdle, to the common inns,
Where 't is the gold has welcome, not the guest.
Nearing the mansion of the soul, each waits
Without, until the master of the house
Come frankly forth, come frankly as the day,
And take him by the hand, and lead him in,
And say with all his heart, "Thine is my house,
O Guest; use all, and debtor be for naught:
Thy presence is thy recompense, that still
O'er measuring service unto largess runs."

D. A. W.

ENLIGHTENMENTS.

BY JAIKUS.

CHARITY. — Such is the perfect relation, the normal needs of men never clash, but support each other. Such is the perfect provision, what I rightly do for myself I do for all others. So is it true that Charity may begin at home. One cannot give of poverty of soul. Charity flows only from wealth. Who can escape the beneficence and power of your personal wealth? How shall a Man conceal himself or be lost? All ages after inherit your wealth. Your greatest Charity is your bequest of SOUL.

COMPANY. — A great traveller said to Socrates, "I have travelled much, but never with much enjoyment." "Would you know the reason?" asked Socrates. "You have always travelled with yourself." There is more than appears on the surface, in this reply. It is the hint of a universal fact. A man draws about him such company as he is able to entertain. Neither Nature nor Men have anything to say, when there is no response. It is impossible to gain recognition from one whose eyes see not, whose ears hear not. A principle of reciprocity determines our society, the character of it. Deep answereth unto deep. The soul finds the Christ not outside itself. "God's presence chamber is the human heart." God, Nature, Man, all things on Earth, or in Heaven, shall be as thou art able to translate them. Fathom thy soul. ENJOYMENT AND COMPANY ARE FROM WITHIN.

PROVIDENCE. — There was a poor man whose potato crop was nipped by the frost. Having no more seed to plant, he sat down and mourned. In the night-time some neighbors went and replanted for him. Presently new vines were starting up through the ground. With joy and surprise he declared the mercy and goodness of Providence. The power of the frost had been overruled. He was lost in mystery and gratitude, and told all his neighbors what the Lord would do for a man who put his trust in Him.

The next year he deemed it safe and prudent to trust the Lord from the beginning, thus saving all expenditure of money for seed. So he ploughed, and then watched his little field only to see it, day by day, run to weeds. Weary at last of the experiment, he concluded that, to trust Providence now and then might answer, but taking one year with another, it did n't pay.

I am disposed to think that this little story, which has in some forgotten way come to my knowledge, illustrates that trust of Providence which is everywhere wise, and that which is everywhere *not* wise. This potato-raising man was evidently not in the secret. *It always pays to trust Providence.* We cannot at all times escape this consideration of "*pay*." The thing to be looked after, is, that you square yourself with this providence; that you trust it, and *not* your own penurious, lazy, or worldly speculating whim. Providence is with you in all appointed ways. When you have done your all, then, "*Wait on the Lord and be still.*" God has created us as his work-

ers. He will do for us nothing which we are able to do for ourselves ; able, not only at this present moment, but at any future moment, through our capacity for growth. The Gods do nothing when men are idle. The mountains stand unmoved, and no *faith* can start them. When this potato-man had done his all in his first planting, then Providence came to his succor. Providence was dwelling in the good hearts of his neighbors. They had seen his honest efforts to help himself, and when the frost had baffled him, they were happy to baffle the frost. Thus the frost was likewise a Providence for them. It helped confirm the presence of God in their own hearts.

Providence is omnipresent, compelling from every thing some revelation of its own perfection ; of its adequate powers for its own purposes of destiny. Your wit shall be sharpened with each new trial, and radiate from you in all manner of inventions. Necessity is a fruitful mother. She leads her children ever forth unto their Day of Achievement. Man does not know what vast possibilities slumber within him. He cannot be tempted beyond what he is able. Every aspiration is a pledge of his power.

But I must say, and then close, that Providence does not reside in individual men, but in humanity. When one is sick, another is well ; when one is weak, another is strong ; when one is ignorant another is wise ; when one is asleep, another is awake : so Health, Strength, Wisdom and Watchfulness, sufficient unto the emergency, are ever present, and potent throughout the world, and God is praised, who hath marvelously created Mankind, —embracing all people and all ages, past, present, and to come, into the perfect stature of his own power and goodness !

THE DENIAL OF CHRIST.

THERE was once a bishop who spent all his time in building costly churches and performing gorgeous ceremonies, and assured all who gave him money for these things, of full forgiveness for all their sins. Thus the poor and ignorant were left unfed, except by one of the humblest of the clergy, who gave himself wholly to teaching and relieving them. His sympathy for them forced him to preach against the rich men who oppressed them. Then there arose great indignation among the patrons of the bishop, and the preacher was suspended from all his functions. But still he went on working for the poor and ignorant. Disregarding the discipline of the church, he soon came to disregard her doctrines also.

Neglected by his brethren in the ministry, he fell among heretics who taught him to deny the Divinity of Christ, but still he went on laboring for Christ's poor. At length the bishop summoned him before him and said, "They tell me that thou dost not worship Jesus Christ." He answered, "They tell thee the truth. I worship God our Father and him only." Then the bishop said, "Thou hast denied Christ." And he answered again,

"Who is Jesus of Nazareth that I should honor him?" Then the bishop said to his attendants "He blasphemeth. Let him be imprisoned." And so the heretic was imprisoned, and soon died of the hardships of his confinement. Then the bishop rejoiced greatly and said in the pulpit of his cathedral, "Thus the Lord Jesus smiteth him that denieth him." That night he dreamed a dream, and lo! he and the dead heretic stood together before the throne whereon sat the Son of Man in his glory. And the judge said, "He that speaketh a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him. Whatsoever ye have done unto the least of my brethren, I receive as done to me. Thou who hast fed the hungry and taught the ignorant, I account thee my disciple. Thou hast given thy life for what thou in thy blindness deemedst the truth, I, who am the Truth, receive thee as having died for me. Thou hast confessed me on earth, I confess thee in heaven. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. But thou, who callest thyself my bishop, thou hast neglected to feed my sheep, and therein thou hast denied me. Thou hast left the sins of the rich men unrebuked, and therein a second time, thou hast denied me. Thou hast persecuted even unto death, him who sought to follow in my steps. Thrice hast thou denied me among men. I deny thee before my Father and his angels. Go hence and learn what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shalt enter into my Kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father."

FRED MAY HOLLAND.

"THE RADICAL" AND RELIGION.

LETTER OF CRITICISM FROM HENRY JAMES.

[THE following letter is one of a number, upon the same general topic, which we have been pleased to receive. We count it among the cheering signs of the time, that the subject of Religion is securing more and more a thoughtful attention. Mr. James's letter, unlike the others which have been sent us, takes exception to our brief statement concerning Religion, made in the September number. We are glad to offer our readers the benefit of Mr. James's opinion. The essay which he promises upon the True Philosophy of Religion, we shall publish in due time.

LETTER.

MY DEAR MR. EDITOR:—You asked me a little while since to contribute to your periodical; will you accept a contribution slightly critical?

I like your new publication for its neatness of finish, and the atmosphere of intellectual freedom it carries with it; but it seems to me to be a little hazy upon the subject to which it is professedly devoted—Religion. I suppose indeed that Religion, dogmatically regarded, is fast losing all its old dis-

tinctness, and will ere long give place to a purely sentimental conception of the subject, which will make it cover the whole realm of man's social and æsthetic activity. But this is a totally modern use of the word, and is quite incongruous with what was originally meant by it. That the old Irish woman whom you describe as dozing on a bench in Boston Common on a hot Sunday morning, may present a more grateful picture in that position to eyes divine and human, than the same old woman pent up in a church among a steaming crowd of worshippers intent upon their ritual fandangoes, is quite conceivable; but it astonishes me to hear you call it also a more "religious" picture. So your friend Mr. Collyer has a good right to admire men of genius, men who help the world along; and even to defend them from injurious criticism when they prefer on occasion the claims of their vocation to those of public worship. But I don't see that he has any right to say in a general way that Religion means helpfulness. Helpfulness, as Mr. Collyer calls it, is an unquestionable good thing in itself, or he could n't have made it the text of so charming an Essay; but I deny that it ever entered into the original unsophisticated meaning of the word Religion, any more than the flavor of peaches did, or the law of gravitation; both of which are good things. No doubt Religion is a tree which bears very juicy succulent fruit; but any one who has seen a Rhode Island apple orchard can easily understand what capital fruit may grow upon the most gnarled, uncomely trunk and branches. And I insist that there is the same contrast between the peaceable fruits of religion in the world, and the grim, stormy, tempest-tossed form of Religion herself, that there is between a barrel of beautiful Rhode Island pippins and the ugly, squat, contorted tree that bringeth them forth.

Religion, in its primitive, undefiled sense, by no means implied on the part of its votary a positive attitude towards good, but rather a negative attitude towards evil. That is to say, the distinctively religious man was not the man who was primarily intent upon doing good, but rather upon combatting evil. According to all the great primitive creeds, a man may have a perfectly sweet, natural disposition, and be inclined by temperament to every innocent and orderly delight, and yet if he have not, typically at least, undergone a change of nature or become a partaker of a new Divine birth, he is no better than a castaway. This was the invariable use of the word before religion had sunk into a sentimental moralism; and all the good done by men previous to this indispensable divine lustration of their nature, was held to be inwardly corrupt and only outwardly fair. In other words, Religion originally postulated no harmonious, but only a contrarious relation between God and man. It alleged a natural disqualification on man's part for God's favor, and therefore suspended his vital sanctity upon his being redeemed from that taint. We may, if we please, amuse ourselves with this deliverance of the early religious conscience. We may vote the early religious mind of the race to have been a false witness of the truth, or borne a perverse testimony to the characteristic tendencies of human nature. But we cannot deny that Religion then uniformly pictured her votary as naturally

exposed to the divine clemency summarily comprehended in what was called the Church. You may, I repeat, consider this pretension of the early religious conscience to have been wholly unfounded; may persuade yourself, in fact, that it was sheer nonsense from top to bottom; but there the pretension stands, never to be explained by our modern pulpit poltroonery, which seeks to drown out of mind all the deeper problems of life and destiny, by representing the relations of God to man, and man to God, as purely sentimental; that is, personal and egotistic on both sides alike, and therefore perilous to every instinct of true manhood in the soul.

This, then, is my criticism of your periodical: that in professing to be devoted to Religion, it yet looks at Religion from a wholly private point of view, and ignores its immense public or historic significance. It is not of the smallest philosophical consequence how you, or I, or Mr. Collyer interprets Religion; but it is of the deepest philosophic interest to ascertain how all mankind have interpreted it. If your periodical will tell us this fairly and squarely, I think and I hope it will thrive; but if it contents itself with advertising Religion as a something, never understood until now, I think *we* must be content to see it born only to dwindle. New views of religious truth are inevitable and desirable; but Religion itself has a perfectly fixed or ascertained import in history, as implying, first, a hostile relation on man's part to God; and then a great scheme of propitiatory dealing on God's part with man, by which He gradually cheats the latter out of his enmity, and reconciles him in immortal friendship; and any views of it, consequently, which ignore it in this grand historic aspect are too superficial to be interesting, except to persons who are wholly disinterested in the subject.

But I am afraid I shall exhaust my welcome, if I go on to protract my letter. But if you should like me at any time to state what, in my view, is the true philosophy of religion, apprehended as I report it, I will do my best to comply with your request. Yours truly, H. J.

BOOK NOTICE.

[The following Book Notice was prepared for the September Number of the Atlantic, but in the process of publication brevity was consulted with such success, that the whole criticism disappeared. Hardly more than a column of general approbation remains to show how the Atlantic cherishes the office of critic and its own subscription list. Such a shining example of American independence must certainly extort something from the human mind. And we are authorized to say that whenever heretofore the Atlantic has published criticisms of a safe and orthodox nature, it was entirely by accident that brevity was not consulted. We commence by quoting the few introductory lines which the Atlantic did not deem disastrous to its subscribers and disagreeable to Mr. Hedge and Christianity. If the reader chooses, he can afterwards qualify the candor with the candy, as he admires

the vigor with which the first of American periodicals has thrown off an element so deleterious as criticism.

REASON IN RELIGION. By FREDERIC HENRY HEDGE. Boston: Walker, Fuller & Co.

"The various essays which are brought together under this title, discuss questions of Theology, and the opinions which mankind holds upon the most interesting philosophical and spiritual themes. The author's aim is to state, as fairly as he can, conflicting views, and to propound his own solution. In this labor, Mr. Hedge appears to represent the condition of Unitarian thinking which prefers a rational to a traditional ground of authority in matters pertaining to the spiritual life, and strives to interpret and accommodate the sacred history without forsaking it."

(Further than this the *Atlantic* does not venture.)

He stands where the *juste-milieu*, promising to become thoroughly critical, still holds with average Unitarianism upon some essential points: so that when the Left-Wing would claim him for a leader, he advances towards an unexpected pacification with the Right: not, however, effecting it with the more orthodox of the party, because his intellect is still too clear, and his common sense too shrewd. For they insist that in every collision between Science and Scripture, Science must give way before the text: while he claims that the interpretations of a genuine science can abrogate it. At such points, Mr. Hedge narrowly escapes admitting the supreme authority of Reason; but there appears to be some recoil of a cool and cautious temperament, which has balanced statements so long, and so heartily hated the crudeness which sometimes devotes itself to speculation, that he jumps back again upon some of the printed representations which the soul has once made of its experiences; this he does just when you are supposing that he had taken passage with the soul, which by developing, can alone explain and justify itself. A perilous jump, the Orthodox liberals aver, since he had pushed off too far before it seemed to him reasonable to attempt it. A useless expenditure of a manly intellect, the Radicals exclaim, who wonder that it does not feel quite safe in the deep-keeled and stout-ribbed buoyancy of the Master Builder. In short, of course, whenever a man essays that backward jump from the act of reasoning to the record that contains reason, he lands in the *juste-milieu*.

This is shown, for instance, in the admirable Preliminary to the book upon "Rational Christianity," entitled, "The Cause of Reason the Cause of Faith." After vindicating Rationalism out of Scripture itself, out of History, and out of the necessary constitution of the human mind, and making, in this review, some very clear and satisfactory statements which every liberal thinker would subscribe, and cordially thank Mr. Hedge for such an opportunity, he suddenly pauses to say: "I am far from maintaining that Christianity must stand or fall with the belief in miracles; but I do maintain that Christian Churches, as organized bodies of believers must stand or fall with the Christian confession, — that is, the confession of Christ as

divinely human Master and Head." And we find that he has all along, while making such a thorough proclamation of the supremacy of Reason, assumed a boundary-line beyond which Reason must not go. But why should not the human reason, to which the divinity of Christ is addressed, accept that undoubted fact upon grounds of reason, and with all the consequences they involve? The Orthodox will say that Mr Hedge has already speculated so far that his boundary line is useless; the Radical will ask, why should a single fact or presumption of a fact be exempt from human search and recognition? How can any assumption that a fact or two must be taken for granted without rationalizing, become an organic and vital distinction involved in the Christian confession? Reason itself is the only preliminary fact, without which, neither living or confessing can proceed. And Reason itself is a limit as well as an expanse. It is a work of superfluity to furnish it with bars. But Reason includes, as Mr. Hedge himself would gladly have all men know, the intuitive sensibility for moral and spiritual truth: and to this we hasten to refer in the interest of Mr. Hedge's own fine faith in Reason, the fact of the divinity of Christ. Does Mr. Hedge dread to leave the cognizable to our power of recognition? No, but he states that the power of recognition must cognize in this fact something exceptional to the recognizing power. Is it not more consistent to transfer the whole business to a thorough going external Authority, that permits Reason only to recognize the rationality of such pretended certitude?

Elsewhere, as on pages 241, 242, 260, Mr. Hedge seems on the point of remanding the personality of Christ back to the contemplation of the unbiased and independent Reason, as when he says: "The heart that seeks will find a practical solution of it suited to its need; but all will not find the same;" and again, "in the sphere of spiritual contemplation, no personality abides but the ever-becoming personality of God, conceived by faith, and born of faith in the individual soul." But his more conservative intention still lingers in the sentence, "whatever derived and secondary power by Divine permission may hold that place, is a temporary viceregent, occupying a borrowed throne, and exercising a delegated sway." This temporary viceregent is the divinely human Master and Head. And yet, Dr. Baur of Tübingen, and Theodore Parker, would gladly quote the fine saying: "what was true of Christ historically is potentially true of all men. There is nothing between God and man, but man's self-alienation through waywardness and sin." Is it certain, then, as stated on page 228, that "all candid inquiry must agree that Jesus felt himself 'sent' and ordained by God, in a quite peculiar and exceptional sense?"

We believe that a similar judgment of having travelled so far from tradition, that

"Should we wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er,"

will be made upon Mr. Hedge's treatment of miracles, by all the Orthodox liberals, who are told that the modern repugnance to miracles is partly due to the use which has been made of them as the evidences and authority

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of Christian truth. "Miracles are valueless as proof of divine authority because, with our views of such matters, it is easier to believe in the thing to be proved than it is to believe in the alleged proof." The question will naturally recur, of what use, then, are miracles? To this, Mr. Hedge has no satisfactory answer. He simply says that there are more things in heaven and earth than the understanding dreams of, and that if he rejects everything miraculous from the sacred record, he must reject the whole. This is merely a surmise that miracles are possible, and that the accounts of reputed miracles serve as mortar to spiritual truth in Scripture. Yet Mr. Hedge picks out a quantity of this mortar, when he confesses that he cannot receive some of the miracles; and he appears to desist only when his freedom threatens to undermine the history. This does not furnish to any school of believers a philosophical process for retaining the supernatural element in the life of Christ.

But Mr. Hedge also desists from this decomposing criticism because he believes in the *a priori* possibility of miracles: and we find an argument addressed to those who reject all miracles because they are reputed violations of the "order of nature." To this the genuine supernaturalist and the rationalist will unitedly raise the same demur; "You have robbed miracles of their use and station in the Christian scheme, of what consequence is it to prove them not impossible? We do not care to have them possible if their value is exploded. If they do nothing but hold the texts in some kind of continuity upon the printed page, are they worth the surmise that science may yet declare their possibility. *When* will miracles, if possible, be useful? And if they are useless, how can they be ever possible?"

How many things could be referred to some hoped for legitimization by science, if the power of a traditional education lent to them sufficient interest. The Chimera and the Tragelaph might then not be impossible, however useless. It is plain, that this suggestion is the last resort of an intelligence that has stormed all the old lines of the supernatural, and shrinks from attacking the citadel. But caution was sacrificed at the very first parallel which reached and undermined the doctrine, so vital to any theory of the supernatural, that miracles are evidences of Christian truth, and proof of divine authority. After this, science will not think miracles worth the saving.

When Mr. Hedge says that "what we call the order of nature is but the statement, in objective terms, of the limitation of our human experience," we appeal to the hint for a better definition, which is found in the sentence at the head of page 287, "if the truths which relate to the kingdoms of nature come by inspiration, how much more the truths which relate to the kingdom of heaven!" As the divine intellect inspires the finite to develop itself, heaven's first law of order is restated by every province of nature, and her modes of operation are perceived to be the projections of the infinite logic. No science is possible until the human intuition receives and transmits the divine methods. Science could not live a single day, by analysis and synthesis, by induction and deduction, by patient observation and Kep-

lerian hypothesis, if the scientific intellect did not contain the divine categories which planned and uphold the universe. So that the "order of nature," is a continual correction and amplification of the limitations of human experience by the higher modes of the human reason which are diviners of God's creative methods. They descend into apparent disorder, and rhythm and harmony commence. They disenchant all superstitions, let in light and air to ventilate places which mystery has made unwholesome, and nourish and refine our awe by disproving the exceptional. The Chimera would have no chance at all, unless it had been originally a Hebrew one. A Greek or a Vedaic improbability would not be worth trying to interpolate into the consistent logic which appears in the uniformity of nature. If we hold no stock in a superstition we do not care to "bull the market," because, as Mr. Hedge justly remarks, "as a matter of external evidence to be weighed in the balance of probabilities, the *a priori* presumption against such facts outweighs any testimony that can be adduced in its support." If so, and if its use exists no longer, let us not plague science to surmise or to search for its possibility.

We anticipate that another objection will be made against this minimizing the value and rank of miracles, by the more liberal thinkers, who will ask why, if one rejects them entirely, must the whole history also be rejected, which contains the self-evident truths of Christianity. "Attempts to prove the truth of Christianity are like attempts to prove the existence of light. The light shines, and proves itself by shining. . . . This moral light—the light of the Gospel—which shines into every soul that is willing to receive it, and which makes our soul's day,—what can we say of it that shall be so convincing as itself?" That is well said, to our hearty satisfaction. The moral light shines through all the obstructions of the narration, notwithstanding the miracles which Mr. Hedge cannot receive, and side by side with those which he retains. Add to or subtract from the miracles, and this moral light would still shine to kindle the answering light in human hearts. How can such history be undermined? Only by annihilating the moral and spiritual powers which receive its appeal. Eliminate those from man, and a miracle to every text could not save the record. Preserve them, and the soul's vital spark leaps from truth to truth, across the spaces filled by the miraculous, which separates and does not combine. Mr. Hedge himself shows that man's wit has no luting to bind the moral and thaumaturgic.

[Here the Atlantic begins to risk some approbation, but omits the closing paragraph which was perhaps too strong.]

It is a ripe and well-considered volume, admirable in treatment, extremely effective against all shades of evangelical speculation; judged from its own stand-point and within its limits, it is one of the best contributions of the liberal school to the literature of the country. May the freedom of our impersonal criticism stand commended to its magnanimous and genial author.

JOHN WEISS.